

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 1635

AN ACT

To establish within the United States National Park Service the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program, and for other purposes.

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1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “National Underground
3 Railroad Network to Freedom Act of 1998”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.**

5 (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

6 (1) The Underground Railroad, which flour-
7 ished from the end of the 18th century to the end
8 of the Civil War, was one of the most significant ex-
9 pressions of the American civil rights movement dur-
10 ing its evolution over more than 3 centuries.

11 (2) The Underground Railroad bridged the di-
12 vides of race, religion, sectional differences, and na-
13 tionality; spanned State lines and international bor-
14 ders; and joined the American ideals of liberty and
15 freedom expressed in the Declaration of Independ-
16 ence and the Constitution to the extraordinary ac-
17 tions of ordinary men and women working in com-
18 mon purpose to free a people.

19 (3) Pursuant to title VI of Public Law 101–628
20 (16 U.S.C. 1a–5 note; 104 Stat. 4495), the Under-
21 ground Railroad Advisory Committee conducted a
22 study of the appropriate means of establishing an
23 enduring national commemorative Underground
24 Railroad program of education, example, reflection,
25 and reconciliation.

1 (4) The Underground Railroad Advisory Com-
2 mittee found that—

3 (A) although a few elements of the Under-
4 ground Railroad story are represented in exist-
5 ing National Park Service units and other sites,
6 many sites are in imminent danger of being lost
7 or destroyed, and many important resource
8 types are not adequately represented and pro-
9 tected;

10 (B) there are many important sites which
11 have high potential for preservation and visitor
12 use in 29 States, the District of Columbia, and
13 the Virgin Islands;

14 (C) no single site or route completely re-
15 flects and characterizes the Underground Rail-
16 road, since its story and associated resources
17 involve networks and regions of the country
18 rather than individual sites and trails; and

19 (D) establishment of a variety of partner-
20 ships between the Federal Government and
21 other levels of government and the private sec-
22 tor would be most appropriate for the protec-
23 tion and interpretation of the Underground
24 Railroad.

1 (5) The National Park Service can play a vital
2 role in facilitating the national commemoration of
3 the Underground Railroad.

4 (6) The story and significance of the Under-
5 ground Railroad can best engage the American peo-
6 ple through a national program of the National Park
7 Service that links historic buildings, structures, and
8 sites; routes, geographic areas, and corridors; inter-
9 pretive centers, museums, and institutions; and pro-
10 grams, activities, community projects, exhibits, and
11 multimedia materials, in a manner that is both uni-
12 fied and flexible.

13 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are the fol-
14 lowing:

15 (1) To recognize the importance of the Under-
16 ground Railroad, the sacrifices made by those who
17 used the Underground Railroad in search of freedom
18 from tyranny and oppression, and the sacrifices
19 made by the people who helped them.

20 (2) To authorize the National Park Service to
21 coordinate and facilitate Federal and non-Federal
22 activities to commemorate, honor, and interpret the
23 history of the Underground Railroad, its significance
24 as a crucial element in the evolution of the national
25 civil rights movement, and its relevance in fostering

1 the spirit of racial harmony and national reconcili-
2 ation.

3 **SEC. 3. NATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD NETWORK TO**
4 **FREEDOM PROGRAM.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior (in
6 this Act referred to as the “Secretary”) shall establish in
7 the National Park Service a program to be known as the
8 “National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom”
9 (in this Act referred to as the “national network”). Under
10 the program, the Secretary shall—

11 (1) produce and disseminate appropriate edu-
12 cational materials, such as handbooks, maps, inter-
13 pretive guides, or electronic information;

14 (2) enter into appropriate cooperative agree-
15 ments and memoranda of understanding to provide
16 technical assistance under subsection (c); and

17 (3) create and adopt an official, uniform symbol
18 or device for the national network and issue regula-
19 tions for its use.

20 (b) ELEMENTS.—The national network shall encom-
21 pass the following elements:

22 (1) All units and programs of the National
23 Park Service determined by the Secretary to pertain
24 to the Underground Railroad.

1 (2) Other Federal, State, local, and privately
2 owned properties pertaining to the Underground
3 Railroad that have a verifiable connection to the Un-
4 derground Railroad and that are included on, or de-
5 termined by the Secretary to be eligible for inclusion
6 on, the National Register of Historic Places.

7 (3) Other governmental and nongovernmental
8 facilities and programs of an educational, research,
9 or interpretive nature that are directly related to the
10 Underground Railroad.

11 (c) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND MEMORANDA
12 OF UNDERSTANDING.—To achieve the purposes of this
13 Act and to ensure effective coordination of the Federal
14 and non-Federal elements of the national network referred
15 to in subsection (b) with National Park Service units and
16 programs, the Secretary may enter into cooperative agree-
17 ments and memoranda of understanding with, and provide
18 technical assistance to—

19 (1) the heads of other Federal agencies, States,
20 localities, regional governmental bodies, and private
21 entities; and

22 (2) in cooperation with the Secretary of State,
23 the governments of Canada, Mexico, and any appro-
24 priate country in the Caribbean.

1 (d) APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be
2 appropriated to carry out this Act not more than
3 \$500,000 for each fiscal year. No amounts may be appro-
4 priated for the purposes of this Act except to the Secretary
5 for carrying out the responsibilities of the Secretary as
6 set forth in section 3(a).

Passed the House of Representatives June 9, 1998.

Attest:

Clerk.